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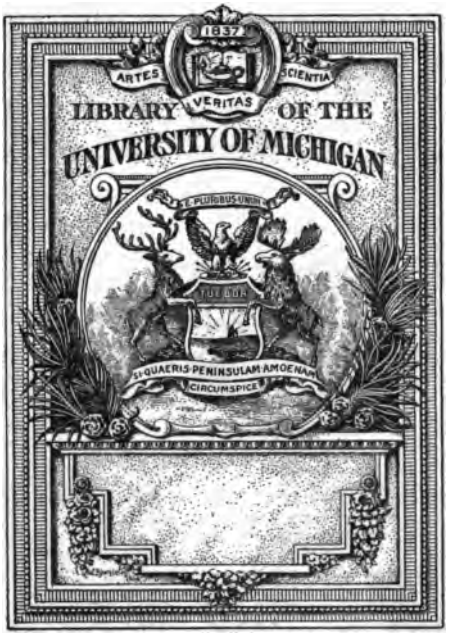

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The Riverside Literature Series

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

FROM THE RIVERSIDE EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS

ANNOTATED FOR SCHOOL USE

By SAMUEL THURBER
MASTER IN THE GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, BOSTON

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INTRODUCTION.

THE help which the beginner in Shakespeare study needs, the wise teacher will be careful to give judiciously, having in view the formation of mental habits rather than preparation for impending scholastic tests. Examinations have, in our educational system, so far transcended their legitimate function of stimulus and guidance, that they are at last fairly installed as ends in themselves, and we constantly hear of preparing for them and passing them as the business of the school. This extravagant homage to examinations warps the ideals of teachers and vitiates their methods in many studies. In *English* it has begotten the highly annotated text, which contemplates an emergency of hurry and is meant to preclude the necessity of stopping to think.

Not until the examination ceases to be a disturbing element in our planning can we teach with reference to the desires, the capacities, and the needs of the youthful mind. The mature Shakespeare scholar finds his stimulus to activity in the hard knots, the unsolved difficulties, of the poet's text: he must have something that resists to brace himself against. But the beginner, in his humble sphere, is in precisely the same case as the learned scholar. He too must have his tangible problem, a clearly felt obstacle to progress, that requires him to take trouble, to think again and again, to push his search in many directions. So dead and inert a thing is information that was unsought and undesired, — information proffered before the need of it was even surmised, — that earnest search, even though it has failed, is far better. A bright youth furnished with the bare text of a play, and having access to but the scantiest literary helps, will, provided he has an inquisitive mind, read

his Shakespeare to better issues than will the possessor of the fullest notes who has had nothing to do but memorize printed matter placed under his eye in the shape of lessons.

In accordance with these convictions I have prepared the *Merchant of Venice* for the use of young readers, whether in or out of school. I have aimed to set the young people at work, not at the task of committing notes to memory, but in the pleasanter and more fruitful occupation of searching for the materials of which notes are made, as if the young people had the notes to make for themselves. For the value of a note lies not in the possession of it, but in the having made it from one's own resources. Therefore my notes have taken the form of questions and cautions, often coupled with suggestions of the route to be pursued in making the required investigations. One of the best ways to stimulate pupils is to give them something to find out and report upon at a future time. It does no harm even to lead them sometimes into a maze, and let them extricate themselves after considerable wandering in wrong paths. A difficulty solved at the instant of its appearance lacks all the elements of interest. A difficulty conquered after valiant efforts and repeated failures becomes memorable, and whets the appetite for more adventures.

The notes appended to these pages will be found few in comparison with the noteworthy points. There are not many lines of Shakespeare that do not furnish occasion for some sort of comment. Teachers will use their discretion as to the time they shall linger over any given matter. A good rule is to dwell upon passages so long as the pupil's interest does not flag. I have found in my own classes that it is possible to advance rapidly, even through matter abounding in difficulties, by distributing the items of research among the individuals of a class. The most charming kind of recitation is that to which each pupil brings his own preparation, unlike that of any other. To such a recitation all listen with eagerness.

In my annotation, as often as it seemed feasible, I have referred the student, for light on special points, to other passages in the poet's works. The habit of seeking explanations of Shakespearian difficulties in Shakespeare himself is of the very first importance. It has seemed to me also desirable to familiarize the learner in this way with the plays at large, even though it be only to such extent as is implied in turning the leaves and searching for passages and words. These references are to the *Globe* Shakespeare, published by Macmillan & Co. As this book has come to be almost universally recognized by Shakespeare scholars as a standard for purposes of reference, and is exceedingly cheap, it may be named as the first requisite among collateral helps for the study of the poet.

Next in importance is Mrs. Clarke's *Concordance.* With the aid of this book the pupil can make discoveries for himself of all sorts of analogies and illustrations. Of perhaps equal value, and for very similar purposes, is Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon.* Schmidt classifies the meanings of words and refers to act, scene and line, but usually does not quote the context; whereas Mrs. Clarke simply collects all instances of each word, without classification, even mingling parts of speech, and refers merely to act and scene, but quotes enough to give some idea of the use of the word in each instance. Thus both books are important adjuncts to the school-room apparatus for literary study.

The larger English dictionaries, like the *International Webster* and the *Century*, are in themselves adequate helps to the solution of many of the difficulties that confront the beginner in Shakespeare. The habit of constant reference to the dictionary is quite as important in this study as in any other.

At an early period of his occupation with Shakespeare, the young student should become acquainted with the facts of the poet's life. An outline of the history of the times of Elizabeth and James he will doubtless have got already, or

soon will get, from his study of English history. The learner's attention may properly be called to the facts that Shakespeare's opportunity for education and observation was by no means a peculiarly restricted one, and that he was early recognized by his contemporaries as a poet and playwright of surpassing power. About his life there remains great obscurity, for the records of it are, at least in comparison with our desire to know about it, painfully meagre. But this scantiness of information about the poet's life is altogether natural: there is about it no element of the marvelous, — nothing that requires or suggests the invention of startling hypotheses to account for the existence of the works that bear his name.

Lives of Shakespeare are to be found in many of the standard editions of his works, and in all the encyclopædias. The great authority is Halliwell-Phillips, whose *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, although not interesting to young persons as reading-matter, may often, even by them, be profitably consulted on special topics. Much the same may be said of F. G. Fleay's *Chronicle History of the Life and Works of William Shakespeare*. Quite within the range of young readers is the little book of Samuel Neil, — *Shakespeare, a Critical Biography*. More easily accessible will be found Mrs. Caroline H. Dall's *What we really know about Shakespeare*. The article on Shakespeare in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, by Professor Baynes, is of moderate length and readable. It presents a concise bibliography of Shakespearian literature, which will sometimes prove convenient for reference. Professor Dowden's *Shakespeare Primer* contains, or hints, the essentials of Shakespearian study. This book is so easily procurable, and is so entirely trustworthy, that it may be recommended to the young student as a desirable possession. The life of the poet by Richard Grant White, prefixed to his edition of the works, is eminently vivacious in style, if not altogether pleasing in tone and spirit.

Whenever a play of Shakespeare is on the docket of the English class, it is indispensable that there lie on the table for easy reference a copy of the play in Furness' *Variorum* edition, if indeed the play in question is among those which at the time have appeared in this form. The *Merchant of Venice* is happily one of these. Whether the notes in this volume refer to Furness or not, the eye of the class should be kept on his pages for the sake of the broad outlook which they give into the world of Shakespearian speculation and research.

As the plays studied in school are read aloud, under correction, and with opportunity for discussion, great pains should be taken with inflection, emphasis, and pronunciation, — in fact, with every element of expression. The metre should be sacredly observed. The poet's lines rarely refuse to be scanned. He is great in his rhythm as well as in his thought. Then it must be remembered that the five-foot iambic line, either riming or unrimed, is the great staple of English verse-forms, and thorough habituation to its movement is a prime condition of ability to read poetry with appreciation of its charm for the ear. Shakespeare uses this measure with infinite freedom. Sometimes he oversteps its limits with seeming wantonness. But this disdain of restraint occurs much less frequently than to the beginner seems to be the case. The verse usually reads aright when we know how to read it.

Believing that a due regard for the poet's rhythm is an essential part of Shakespearian culture, I give frequent notes to warn or instruct the reader in this matter. For further study of the subject, the learner may resort to Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*. No outside study, however, will take the place of careful examination and comparison of the lines themselves, and of frequent reading of them aloud with the purpose to bring out as fully as possible both their melody and their meaning. The poet notably wrote his plays, not for the closet, but for the stage: he had in mind espe-

cially how they would sound. We cannot neglect, therefore, to speak his verses with all deference to the laws which he observed in composing them; and the endeavor to ascertain these laws is a fundamental part of the study of his works.

In his grammar and vocabulary, again, the poet is almost as interesting as he is in his metre. The young learner finds new words, and old words in new meanings; new forms of inflection; new applications of mode and tense; new arrangements of phrase and sentence. To the beginner the poet's diction is a chief perplexity. This trouble must of course be overcome by resolute study. The language of Shakespeare is not merely the current speech of his contemporaries. There is in it something of the poet's own which it is profitable to explore, just as it is profitable to investigate his life and his art.

Many questions concerning the story or the characters of the *Merchant of Venice* will suggest themselves as the play is read by a class of bright young persons. Some of these questions are hinted at in the notes. Those which have to do with the origin of the plot and the period of the poet's life to which the play belongs will be solved by reference to Furness or to the introductions in the standard editions, as, *e. g.*, in Grant White. But there remains one question of profound interest, the indications for whose solution should be watched for in the development of every Shakespearian play. This is the question of *dramatic time*. In Furness' Variorum *Merchant of Venice* the subject is discussed in its bearings on this play, and reference is made to the theory of Professor Wilson (Christopher North) as to dramatic time in Shakespeare. Wilson's theory is presented in the Variorum *Othello*. It first appeared in the series of papers called *Dies Boreales* in Blackwood's Magazine.

According to Professor Wilson, we are to look, in a play of Shakespeare, for indications both of quick movement and of slow movement. This is no inconsistency in a drama, where the purpose is not to chronicle events, but to produce

an illusion. Most persons read the *Merchant of Venice* without wondering where the lapse of three months is provided for. They have seen things ripening at a pace and to a degree that implies all this time; and they have seen the persons moving and speaking with a haste and energy that seems to account for but two or three days. Not until we dissect the drama as literature and treat it as a chronicle do we begin to be querulous about the time.

It will be extremely interesting to young students to watch for the touches that convey the impression of haste, and for those that seem to retard the movement and to deepen our impression of time adequate to the maturing of the business of the drama. In this connection help will be found in Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke's *Shakespeare Key*, a book which for many other purposes also will prove useful in the school library. Once warned, however, to be on the alert, the young student will easily detect the passages of the two kinds. In *The Tempest* the two kinds of time coincide, and the play conforms to the classic rule of unity of time. In nearly all the other plays they diverge.

Such hints as are offered in this introduction and in the notes appended to the text should be considered by the teacher of the Shakespeare class only as specimens of the matters that may rightly be brought under review in school. The possibilities of interesting discussion, research and speculation are, to the Shakespeare scholar, infinite. It must not be thought for a moment that it is well, with beginners, to try even approximately to exhaust these possibilities. Matters that are clearly beyond the reach of the learner must be let alone. It is a mistake, however, to withhold from readers the matters that are best fitted to stimulate their curiosity and invigorate their faculties. It will do no harm to attempt some feats that cannot be achieved.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The DUKE OF VENICE.
The PRINCE OF MOROCCO, } *Suitors to*
The PRINCE OF ARRAGON, } *Portia.*
ANTONIO, *a merchant of Venice.*
BASSANIO, *his friend, suitor to Portia.*
SALANIO, }
SALARINO, } *friends to Antonio and*
GRATIANO, } *Bassanio.*
SALERIO, }
LORENZO, *in love with Jessica.*
SHYLOCK, *a rich Jew.*
TUBAL, *a Jew, his friend.*
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *a clown, servant to Shylock.*
OLD GOBBO, *father to Launcelot.*
LEONARDO, *servant to Bassanio.*
BALTHASAR, } *servants to Portia.*
STEPHANO, }
PORTIA, *a rich heiress.*
NERISSA, *her waiting-maid.*
JESSICA, *daughter to Shylock.*
Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other attendants.

SCENE: Partly at Venice and partly at Belmont, Portia's seat, on the Continent.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 't is made of, whereof it is born,

1–7. With this speech of Antonio compare that with which Portia opens the next scene. These two speeches "strike the key-note" of the play, which, although it is called a comedy and comes to a pleasing issue, is in the main sad, and verges closely upon the tragic. The cause of Portia's weariness she soon reveals. Why Antonio is sad is not so clear. You can see what weighs on his mind by noting what he first speaks of when he is alone with Bassanio. See also Act II., Sc. viii. Perhaps the poet merely wishes to represent Antonio as having a mysterious presentiment of coming woe.

2–4. The pronoun **it**, occurring so often in these lines, may refer to the idea of sadness set forth in the first line of the speech. Antonio says he cannot understand his own melancholy, that he is annoyed by it, and is chagrined to see that his friends notice it; but that, after all, he is powerless to resume his usual mood of cheerful friendliness. Notice how little Antonio says until he can talk privately with Bassanio.

3, 4. Note the exuberance of phrase employed to express one and the same idea. This is a peculiar Shakespearian trait. Be on the watch for other instances of it.

I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad.

5. **I am to learn.** A standard expression in the poet's time, with a meaning very different from what the words would have to-day. What this meaning is you may infer from a comparison of this passage with *Henry VI.*, Part III., iv. 4, 2. — Lines of only two or three accents will often be met with. Make a collection of these and see if you can deduce any principle that shall seem to have governed the poet in their use.

8. Be careful to give the verse its five accents. Compare *King John*, II., 1, 24, and 340.

11. The word **pageant** has an interesting history, which can be looked up in the dictionaries. For its meaning in Shakespeare see its use in other plays, as in *Temp.*, IV., 1, 155, *As you Like it*, II., 7, 138, *Mid. N. Dream*, III., 2, 14, and elsewhere.

14. The line has a grave rhetorical defect. Decide to what antecedents the pronouns **they** and **them** refer.

17. The French word *toujours*, which usually has the meaning that **still** has here, sometimes expresses just the idea to which we limit the word **still at present. The two meanings are akin.**

Salar. My wind cooling my broth
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew docked in sand,
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And, in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
But tell not me; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie!

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,

27. **Andrew**, a merchant ship; possibly so called in memory of Andrea Doria, the great Genoese admiral. (*White.*)

35. The word **this**, being a pronoun apparently without antecedent, is of course unmeaning, unless we suppose the actor here to make a gesture which shall somehow indicate great wealth.

44. Yet see his letter to Bassanio, Act III., Sc. 2.

47. Note in this line and in 178, this scene, a dissyllabic word

Because you are not merry: and 't were as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,
And other of such vinegar aspect
That they 'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, *and* GRATIANO.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company.

Salar. I would have stayed till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

that has to be scanned as one syllable. Yet this word sometimes has the value of two syllables, as in scene 3, line 59.

50. Find the one other character, also a Venetian, whom the poet represents as using the oath **By Janus**.

54. Discuss the peculiarity of **vinegar** as an epithet of **aspect**. — The word **aspect** is in Shakespeare (and Milton) always accented as in this verse. See II., 1, 8.

56. **Nestor** figures largely in one other of the poet's plays. What Nestor stood for to him must be learned from that play. Do this rather than consult the classical dictionary.

61. The present meaning of the word **prevent** is derived from the original one, which appears here, as it frequently does in our older literature. See, e. g., *Cæsar*, V., 1, 105. See the adjective *prevenient*, Par. Lost, xi., 3.

62–64. Notice the **urbanity with which Antonio dismisses Salanio and Salarino.**

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

Salar. We 'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you: but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it that do buy it with much care:
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio —
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks —

66–71. Bassanio cordially and merrily greets the two departing friends, but does not ask them to stay. Evidently all four of these gentlemen, who are thus being got rid of, are represented as being the social inferiors of Antonio and Bassanio.

70, 71. What is the appointment made here? Be on the watch for further mention of it.

82. Be careful about the meaning of **mortifying**.

There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!"
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I 'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:
I 'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time:
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell: I 'll grow a talker for this gear.

89. **mantle.** See *Lear*, III., 4, 139, and *Tempest*, IV., 1, 182. Compare Milton's *Comus*, 294.

91. **to be dressed in an opinion of wisdom.** Express this idea in modern phrase.

92. **conceit**: remember that this word has acquired in recent times a meaning that it did not have for Shakespeare.

93. **as who should say**: see Webster's Dictionary, under *who*.

98, 99. Confused, but intelligible. Refer to the *gospel of Matthew*, v, 22. — What is the subject of *would damn*?

102. **opinion** here has the same meaning as in line 91, but notice the different metric value of the word in the two cases.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried.

[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*

Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'T is not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time something too prodigal
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love,
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlocked to your occasions.

114–118. This one prose speech, occurring in a scene otherwise wholly in verse, suggests discussion.

139. Be sure to find the five accents. The reader of Shakespeare must be prepared to find sometimes one syllable, and sometimes two, in the ending — *ion*.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way with more advised watch,
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both
Or bring your latter hazard back again
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:

143. The line had better be read with six accents. Such lines often have a pause in the middle and may be regarded as trimeter couplets.

160. **prest** has no connection with the verb *to press*. See *Pericles*, IV., prol., 45.

165, 166. Compare, metrically, the two instances of the word **Portia** in these lines. Scan the lines in which the name **Antonio** occurs, and see if it always counts the same number of syllables.

Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be racked, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

169, 170. Remember that Portia is a blonde. As to her friend and companion in the play, the apparent derivation of her name from the Italian word, *nero* (French *noir*), has occasioned the surmise that we are to conceive her as a brunette.

183. **presently** has here, as nearly always in Shakespeare, its primitive meaning, which is quite different from its modern one.

185. Antonio names two distinct ways of raising money. What are they?

Sc. II. Consider why the women in this scene speak prose, after the men in the previous one have had their talk in verse.

1. By my troth. The reader of Shakespeare becomes fami-

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences and well pronounced. 10

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none? 26

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver and lead, whereof who chooses his mean-

liar with an astonishing variety of phrases of asseveration and protestation. We have seen several already. — **my little body**. Of course Portia was not little. She is not describing her person. There is another way to account for the phrase she uses.

3. Note that the poet makes his characters use both the pronouns of the second person, *thou* and *you*. Try to observe whether his practice is governed by any rule.

ing chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come? 34

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that 's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say "If you will not have me, choose:" he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two! 51

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count

43. **County Palatine.** A count palatine was a noble officer, who exercised royal authority within his county or province; the same as *palsgrave* in German. (*White.*)

47. **weeping philosopher.** The Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, from the well-known melancholy of his disposition, was represented in various old traditions as the contrast to Democritus, weeping over the follies and frailties at which the latter laughed. See *Classical Dictionary.*

Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England? 65

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behaviour every where.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour? 76

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another. 81

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an

80. **sealed under**: gave his bond, or became surety, for another blow.

87. **an**: a word occurring in Shakespeare with extreme frequency, and meaning merely *if*. Often the two words, *an if*, are

the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the Devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I 'll be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio, — as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

used with no additional meaning. Look up the origin of the word in Skeat's *Etym. Dictionary*, or in *Murray*.

90–92. Make the verbs conform to our ideas of propriety.

104. **Sibylla**; the Latin for sibyl. See Dictionary.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-Man.

How now! What news?

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a foreruner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he had the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

While we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Venice. A public place.*

Enter BASSANIO *and* SHYLOCK.

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

121. **The four strangers**: unintelligible, as six have been mentioned.

7. Note the three auxiliary verbs. Would they all be used in the same senses to-day?

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary? 14

Shy. Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio? 30

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here? 37

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

12. Just as business men to-day speak of a man as *good*.

19. What the **Rialto** stood for to Shakespeare is to be learned from this play and especially from this scene. See also III., 1.

22. **there be land-rats.** *Be* is of course indicative, as often in older English. See the *New English Dictionary*.

38. Note the transition to verse.

Shy. [*Aside.*] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!
Bass. Shylock, do you hear?
Shy. I am debating of my present store,
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.
Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,

40. Make sure of the five accents.

43. The word **usance** appears nowhere in Shakespeare except on the lips of Shylock. With him it is a term of honor. The word *interest* he leaves to Antonio and the rest, who use it with contempt.

44. **upon the hip**: a wrestler's phrase. See this play, IV., 1, 326, and *Othello*, II., 1, 314.

57. **Rest you fair.** A phrase of apology. Give its modern equivalent. See another form of this phrase, more fully expressed, in *As You Like It*, V., 1, 65.

Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I 'll break a custom. — Is he yet possessed
How much you would?
Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.
Ant. And for three months.
Shy. I had forgot; three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see; but hear you;
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.
Ant. I do never use it.
Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep —
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third —
Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?
Shy. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.
Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But swayed and fashioned by the hand of Heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?
Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast:
But note me, signior.
Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,

62. Is he yet possessed. See IV., 1, 35.
76. Compromised: not at all in its usual modern sense.

The Devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

Shy. Three thousand ducats; 't is a good round sum.
Three months from twelve; then, let me see; the rate —

Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
"Shylock, we would have moneys:" you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur

93. In this speech Shylock is doing a little figuring, talking to himself. What he is meditating, while speaking so distractedly, becomes plain at last in line 130. Is it worth while to sacrifice three months' interest on a sentimental scheme of revenge? He decides that it is.

95. **beholding**: an erroneous use of the present participle, common in Shakespeare's day. What should we say now?

96. **many a time and oft.** See this same redundancy of phrase in *Cæsar*, I., 1, 42.

105. **Go to**: an exceedingly common exclamation, which, like our *well* and *indeed*, got its whole meaning from the inflection with which it was uttered. As it recurs, try to replace it with a modern word or phrase.

Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
"Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this;
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You called me dog; and for these courtesies
I 'll lend you thus much moneys"?
Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.
Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stained me with,
Supply your present wants and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you 'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

123, 124. Was it Antonio's view of the morality of taking interest, or Shylock's, that was destined to prevail?

126. Correct the ungrammatical language.

128–132. Was it not at this time probable that Antonio would punctually redeem his bond? If so, what satisfaction could Shylock anticipate from the arrangement he here offers to make?

132. Bassanio's words are inserted in Shylock's speech without interrupting it metrically. Make an entire verse by joining the pieces of Shylock's broken line.

Bass. This were kindness.
Shy. This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.
Ant. Content, i' faith: I 'll seal to such a bond
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.
Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I 'll rather dwell in my necessity.
Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that 's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.
Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship:
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.
Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.
Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;

156. This may be read with six accents, but had better, probably, be read with five. The last two syllables of estimable may be said to count, metrically, for nothing.

Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
I will be with you.

Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew.

[*Exit Shylock.*

The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

Ant. Come on: in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO *and his train;* PORTIA, NERISSA, *and others attending.*

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath feared the valiant: by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

163. **this merry bond.** Note that this is the second time Shylock has used the word *merry* in connection with this business.

2. It is natural to connect **burnished** with the *burning* effect of the sun: but this would be wrong.

9. See **fear** used in the same way in *Taming of the Shrew*, I., 2, 24, and often elsewhere.

Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But if my father had not scanted me
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned Prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have looked on yet
For my affection.

Mor. Even for that I thank you:
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets
To try my fortune. By this scimitar
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his page;
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance,

13, 14. Is this consistent with what Portia has already said about Morocco's complexion?

19. **His wife who wins me.** What is the antecedent of *who?* Is modern English capable of this construction?

20. In what mode is the verb *stood?*

31. See a similar exclamation of grief in *Cæsar*, I., 3, 82, and elsewhere.

And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong,
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage: therefore be advised.

Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

Por. First, forward to the temple: after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[*Cornets, and exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Venice. A street.*

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Certainly my conscienee will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me, saying to me "Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot," or "good Gobbo," or "good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." My conscience says "No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo," or, as aforesaid, "honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels." Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: "Via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend; "for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind," says the fiend, "and run." Well, my

44. to the temple, i. e., to church, to take the oath mentioned in line 40.

46. An ending is omitted. See *Cymbeline*, IV., 2, 347; *Coriolanus*, V., 3, 130; *Troilus*, IV., 4, 7; *Measure for Measure*, IV., 6, 13.

9. scorn running with thy heels. A passage in *Much Ado*, III., 4, 50, suggests that this may be read with two meanings.

10. Via, an Italian word meaning *away*, used in Shakespeare's time to urge horses forward.

conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me "My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son," or rather an honest woman's son; — well, my conscience says "Launcelot, budge not." "Budge," says the fiend. "Budge not," says my conscience. "Conscience," say I, "you counsel well;" "Fiend," say I, "you counsel well:" to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the Devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO, *with a basket.*

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside.*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

21, 23. **God bless the mark** and **saving your reverence** are common conventional phrases for apologizing for some improper expression.

25. **incarnation**: Launcelot's blunder for *incarnate.*

33. Look up the origin of **sand-blind.**

34. **confusions**: perhaps Launcelot's blunder for *conclusions*, *to try conclusions* being a standard phrase, as in *Hamlet*, III., 4, 195. Yet Launcelot really goes on to try *confusions.*

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left; marry at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. By God's sonties, 't will be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no? 44

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [*Aside.*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say 't, is an honest exceeding poor man and, God be thanked, well to live. 50

Laun. Well, let his father be what a will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot. 55

Gob. Of Launcelot, an 't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop. 64

42. **sonties** will be found in *Webster's Dictionary.*

50. **well to live**: variously interpreted as meaning "with every prospect of long life," or "well off."

51. **a**, for *he*, is common in the written language from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century; in the dramatists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it is frequent in representations of familiar speech. — Murray, *New English Dictionary.*

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman; but I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father? 70

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but at the length truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy. 79

Laun. Pray you, let 's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I 'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail. 91

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost

67. **Alack the day**: with this compare Morocco's *alas the while*, and Desdemona's *Alas the heavy day*. The words *alack* and *alas* have interesting etymologies.

thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master 's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, *with* LEONARDO *and other followers.*

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging.

[*Exit a Servant.*

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me? 115

Gob. Here 's my son, sir, a poor boy, —

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify —

99. The phrase, **set up my rest**, will be found in Webster. Launcelot of course is given to punning: but is there any character in the play that does not pun on occasion? Antonio, in the very depth of his misery, indulges in a play of words.

112. **anon**: an interesting word, of frequent occurrence in Shakespeare and Milton, and well known to readers of the Bible. Look up its origin, and consider why it is lost to our modern speech.

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve —

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify —

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins —

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you —

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is —

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtained thy suit:
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferred thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

119. So Mistress Quickly says, "— her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page."

125. **cater-cousins**: the article on this word in the *New English Dictionary* is very interesting. The inflection with which Gobbo's speech is read will depend on the meaning ascribed to *cater-cousins*. The *speech* has the same meaning in either case.

128. What Launcelot tries to say when he says **frutify** is not clear.

140. **preferred, preferment**: be sure of the meaning of these words.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son.
Take leave of thy old master and inquire
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. [*Looks on his palm.*] Well, if any man in Italy hath a fairer table, which doth offer to swear upon a book! I shall have good fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life: here's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man: and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye. [*Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo.*

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestowed,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteemed acquaintance: hie thee, go.

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Where is your master?

143. **The old proverb** : that is, "God's grace is gear enough."

152, 153. So Mrs. Quickly offers, — "I 'll be sworn on a book she loves you." — Launcelot's palmistry will be explained by the dictionary. Better, however, see Knight's note on this passage, and its diagram of the palm with its lines and mounts.

163. Note that as the churls in the scene give way to gentlemen, the language passes from prose to verse.

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks.
[*Exit.*

Gra. Signior Bassanio!

Bass. Gratiano!

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtained it.

Gra. You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour
I be misconstrued in the place I go to
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say Amen,
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

174. **hear thee.** In such phrases as this and *run thee*, *come thee*, *fare thee*, and many others, Abbott regards the pronoun as a reduced or lighter form of the nominative. See his *Shakespearian Grammar*, 212.

187. **hood mine eyes**: what curious trait of the table-manners of Shakespeare's day does this passage reveal? Read the account of the banquet in *Timon of Athens*, III., 6, and notice that here, too, hats appear.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.
Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.
Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.
Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. A room in* SHYLOCK'S *house.*

Enter JESSICA *and* LAUNCELOT.

Jes. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.
Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! These foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit: adieu.
Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot.*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,

14, 15. A touch of compunction, where many more would seem called for. Is not Jessica about as hard-hearted a person as her father?

If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A street.*

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging and return,
All in an hour.

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

Salan. 'T is vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered,
And better in my mind not undertook.

Lor. 'T is now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT, *with a letter.*

Friend Launcelot, what 's the news?

Laun. An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify.

Lor. I know the hand: in faith, 't is a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

Lor. Hold, here, take this: tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately. [*Exit Launcelot.*
Go, gentlemen,

10. to break up this: See *Winter's Tale*, III., 2, 132.

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I 'll be gone about it straight.

Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salar. 'T is good we do so. [*Exeunt Salar. and Salan.*

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house,
What gold and jewels she is furnished with,
What page's suits she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. Before* SHYLOCK'S *house.*

Enter SHYLOCK *and* LAUNCELOT.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio: —
What, Jessica! — thou shalt not gormandise,
As thou hast done with me: — What, Jessica! —
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out; —
Why, Jessica, I say!

Laun. Why, Jessica!

23. provided of: See *Henry V.*, III., 7, 9, and this play, V., 274.

33–36. Note the subjunctives in these lines.

Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me that I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter JESSICA.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
But yet I 'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house. I am right loath to go:
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. An they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum
And the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces,
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:

22–27. Launcelot's speech is as lucid as was the one in which he directed his father to master Jew's.

30. **wry-necked fife.** The old fife was blown with a crooked mouth-piece. (*White.*)

Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear,
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. [*Exit.*

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jes. His words were "Farewell mistress;" nothing else.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrowed purse. Well, Jessica, go in:
Perhaps I will return immediately:
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:
Fast bind, fast find;
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit.*

Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit.*

36. **By Jacob's staff**: evidently a solemn oath with the Hebrews. We have already seen the expression, *to swear upon a book*. With what oath did Hamlet bind his fellow-soldiers, who with him had seen the ghost?

44. Note all the indications of Jessica's character.

52. Is this correct English according to present standards?

SCENE VI. *The same.*

Enter GRATIANO *and* SALARINO, *masqued.*

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salar. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

Gra. That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugged and embraced by the wanton wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weathered ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent and beggared by the wanton wind!

Salar. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I 'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who 's within?

2. A trimeter couplet.

4. Do not misplace the emphasis.

15. **The scarfed bark**: See *All 's Well*, II., 3, 214.

24. Perhaps the emphatic **you** is to be so read as to fill the place of an accented syllable and a light one.

Enter JESSICA, *above, in boy's clothes.*

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I 'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 't is night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange:
But love is blind and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 't is an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.

Lor. So are you sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stayed for at Bassanio's feast.

Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

[*Exit above.*

31. With this line compare *Mids. N. Dream*, III., 1, 156, and make the inference suggested by the comparison.

42. Understand the pun.

44. Be sure of the emphasis.

Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.
Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
And true she is, as she hath proved herself,
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Enter JESSICA, *below.*

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

[*Exit with Jessica and Salarino.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Who 's there?
Gra. Signior Antonio!
Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?
'T is nine o'clock: our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.
Gra. I am glad on 't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA *with the* PRINCE OF MOROCCO, *and their trains.*

Por. Go draw aside the curtains and discover
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.
Mor. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,

51. **by my hood**: evidently a common oath. Chaucer has it twice, though it does not appear elsewhere in Shakespeare. Yet Slender swears "by these gloves" and "by this hat."

54. On the conjunctional affix, *that*, see Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 287.

4, 6. Discuss the relative pronouns in these lines. See Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 264.

" Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire ; "
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
" Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves ; "
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
" Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
How shall I know if I do choose the right ?

Por. The one of them contains my picture, Prince :
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

Mor. Some god direct my judgement ! Let me see ;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket ?
" Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
Must give : for what ? for lead ? hazard for lead ?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages :
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross ;
I 'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue ?
" Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
As much as he deserves ! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand :
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough ; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady :
And yet to be afeard of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve ! Why, that 's the lady :
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding ;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.

5, 7, 9. Can you give any reason for the metrical peculiarity of the inscription-verses ?

14. back again : infer the meaning of this expression from what follows.

What if I strayed no further, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold;
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."
Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia:
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits, but they come,
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'T were damnation
To think so base a thought: it were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she's immured,
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold, but that's insculped upon;
But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

35. In what mode are the verbs?

43. **to come view**: See *Merry Wives*, IV., 2, 80, and *Hamlet*, II., 1, 101; and compare II., 9, 18, of this play.

51. With this verse compare *Hamlet*, IV., 5, 213, and *Henry VI.*, Part II., IV., 1, 50, and make inference.

53. **tried gold**: See II., 9, 63, this play.

56. **A coin that bears the figure of an angel**: See *John*, II. 590, and III., 3, 8; *Much Ado*, II., 3, 35.

58. **an angel in a golden bed**: See III., 2, 115, this play.

Por. There, take it, Prince; and if my form lie there,
Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket.*

Mor. O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I 'll read the writing.

[*Reads.*] All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgement old,
Your answer had not been inscrolled:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed; and labour lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*

Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SALARINO *and* SALANIO.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail:
But there the Duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together

65–73. Who or what is represented as speaking? Describe the metre of the scroll.

Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica:
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
" My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats."
Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.
Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.
Salar. Marry, well remembered.
I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught:
I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
And wished in silence that it were not his.
Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

25. **look he keep**: note the mode of the second verb.

27. **I reasoned**: common enough in Shakespeare in this sense.

29. How are the five accents to be found?

33. **You were best**: originally the *you* in this phrase was dative. A trace of this usage is seen in such expressions as Ophelia's "*woe is me*," which is historically correct, while Prospero's

Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answered, "Do not so;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love:
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there:"
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.

Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter NERISSA *with a* Servitor.

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight:

"*I am woe*" is logically absurd. Our modern *you had better* is strictly grammatical and logical. Shakespeare uses this also, as in *Henry VIII.*, V., 3, 132.

42. **your mind of love**: Bassanio carries with him to Belmont a *mind of love:* that is, he is minded to devote himself there to "fair ostents of love."

52. **his embraced heaviness** is evidently the heaviness to which he clings, or which clings to him.

53. **Do we so**: a first person plural imperative, now obsolete, but once common in English, as it still is in German. So in *Hamlet*, I., 1, 33.

The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON, PORTIA, *and their trains.*

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble Prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contained,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

Ar. I am enjoined by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 't was I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage;
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Ar. And so have I addressed me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base lead.
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."
What many men desire! that many may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,

13. Read with five accents.

19. **addressed me**: see *Hamlet*, I., 2, 216; *All's Well*, III., 6, 103. How should we put these words of Arragon into English of to-day?

25. Note the metrical peculiarity of the line.

26. **By**: see I., 2, 52, this play.

Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves:"
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be gleaned
From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
Picked from the chaff and ruin of the times
To be new-varnished! Well, but to my choice:
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket.*

Por. Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Ar. What 's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,

28. Only five accents.

32. **jump with**: a common use of *jump* in Shakespeare. See *Henry IV.*, Part I., I., 2, 78.

51. See II., 6, 2.

Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
"Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves."
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

Por. To offend, and judge, are distinct offices
And of opposed natures.

Ar. What is here?

[*Reads.*] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silvered o'er; and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head:
So be gone: you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.

61. Compare *Troilus and Cressida*, IV., 4, 47 and draw inference. — The meaning of this speech is not wholly clear. Perhaps, meaning to soothe the feelings of the disappointed prince, Portia reminds him that his wrong judgment of the caskets does not imply that he is, on general grounds, an offender, without deserts. He has simply erred in judging: his self-respect ought to remain untainted.

63–79. The scroll, with Arragon's echo of it, should be examined with reference to its metric norm and to the instances where it apparently departs from this norm.

68. **I wis.** Do not mistake this for a pronoun and verb. See *Dictionary*.

Sweet, adieu. I 'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Where is my lady?

Por. Here: what would my lord?

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord;
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love:
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

Por. No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!

[*Exeunt.*

81. Note the play on words.

85. **What would my lord?** Being spoken to a servant, how is this to be understood? Note the play on words.

89. **regreets**: i. e., merely *greetings*. The servant goes on to explain what he means by *sensible*.

98. **high-day**: see the Gospel of John, xix. 31.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SALANIO *and* SALARINO.

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wracked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip report be an honest woman of her word.

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio, —— O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! —

Salar. Come, the full stop.

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say Amen betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

9. **knapped**: that is, *nibbled* or *gnawed*. In *Measure for Measure* a character is made to say, — "then ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead."

19. **Let me say Amen betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer.** What superstition in regard to the word Amen is here indicated? Consider Macbeth's case, "wherefore could not I pronounce Amen?"

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That 's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damned for it.

Salar. That 's certain, if the Devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what 's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what 's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same

40. **smug**: we have lost this word; but the German still has *schmuck.*

food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the Devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt Salan., Salar., and Servant.*

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what 's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and

no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa, —

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God. Is 't true, is 't true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wrack.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I 'll plague him; I 'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that 's true, that 's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were

he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, *and* Attendants.

Por. I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.
There 's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well, —
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought, —
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me;
But if you do, you 'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlooked me and divided me;
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,

2, 3. **in choosing wrong, I lose your company.** Show wherein this would, in modern English, be regarded as a faulty construction.

6. Be very careful to put the emphasis aright.

8. Has Portia's conduct always exemplified this general statement about her sex?

14. **Beshrew your eyes.** What kind of expression is this in form, and what is it essentially? In what tone should it be read?

15. **o'erlooked**: not at all in any usual modern sense. See the word in the same meaning that it has here, *Merry Wives*, V., 5, 87.

16. **other** makes one syllable.

Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours. O, these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
I speak too long; but 't is to piece the time,
To eke it and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.
Bass. Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.
Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.
Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:

18. **yours**, as is often the case with monosyllables having a long vowel followed by *r*, makes here two syllables.

20. The first **yours** counts as one syllable, the second as two. — **Prove it so.** Do not imagine this an imperative, which would be meaningless. The same construction occurs again a few lines below, — **live thou.** In *Twelfth Night*, III., 4, 418, we find *if it prove*, and in *Errors*, II., 1, 40, *if thou live;* and these expressions are the exact equivalents of *prove it* and *live thou.* Conditions may be expressed by *if* with the subjunctive, the clause being in the normal order, or by the simple subjunctive, without *if*, with the order of the clause inverted. In *Macbeth* we find, *go not my horse*, and in *Hamlet*, *if the man go*, and both these verbs express future conditions, being in the subjunctive present. Recent English has lost the power to express condition with the inverted order and the present subjunctive, but can still use this form with the subjunctive past. Thus, we can say, *Had I been judge*, and *were the world mine;* but we cannot say, *prove it so*, or *live thou*, to express condition.

21. **not I**: grammatically very faulty. The reader must learn to discriminate between honest old idiom and mere carelessness or ignorance.

25, 26. What is the connection between **the rack** and **confess**?

There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.
Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak anything.
Bass. Promise me life, and I 'll confess the truth.
Por. Well then, confess and live.
Bass. Confess and love
Had been the very sum of my confession;
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.
Por. Away, then! I am locked in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view

36. Note the mode of had been.
44. See *Othello*, V., 2, 247, and *King John*, V., 7, 21.

The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.

Music, whilst BASSANIO *comments on the caskets to himself.*

SONG.

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.
It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell:
I 'll begin it, — Ding, dong, bell.
All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:

61. See note on line 20, *prove it so.*

63–72. The first line of Bassanio's following speech shows that he has been able to draw from the song an important inference. Show how he was justified in doing this. Note that Portia's speech has dwelt upon the music that Bassanio is about to hear: she has given him warning to pay close attention. Is not Portia, then, just a little forsworn? Put together lines 7, 10, 13, 14, and you will see how broadly Portia hints that she is going to give Bassanio points. — In connection with the *song*, consider what the poet would have us understand by **fancy**.

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward searched, have livers white as milk;
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 't is purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

Por. [*Aside.*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!

87. **excrement**: often used in Shakespeare to signify *hair* or *beard.*

91. Catch the pun.

99. For what rhetorical purpose does the poet here use the name **Indian**?

O love,
Be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rein thy joy; scant this excess.
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit.

Bass. What find I here? 115

[*Opening the leaden casket.*

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are severed lips,
Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar 120
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes, —
How could he see to do them? having made one, 125
Methinks it should have power to steal both his
And leave itself unfurnished. Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here 's the scroll, 130
The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads.*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,

115. The verse is evidently to be read with four accents. — What new phase has the verse taken on in this speech of Portia? Is any purpose discernible in this change of form?

119. Be careful to emphasize correctly.

125. **having made one**: an instance of an ill-connected participle, such as is still common in careless writing. — **Having** makes one syllable.

127–129. **how far . . . so far**: a relative preceding its antecedent. Be careful to read correctly.

Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirmed, signed, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich:
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But the full sum of me
Is sum of nothing; which, to term in gross,
Is an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit

141. **I come by note**: what does he mean? — Observe that in its metric form, as well as in its content, this speech of Bassanio corresponds with Portia's *aside*, 108–115.

Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Expressed and not expressed. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio 's dead!

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My Lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me:
And when your honours mean to solemnize

169, 170. What would you say is the gender of **lord** and **master**? — In *converted* the last syllable is lost, the two linguals being fused together. So in *riveted*, V., 1, 167.

175. What is the antecedent of **it**?

193. Interpret the meaning of the line.

The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.
Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.
Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved for intermission.
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.
Por. Is this true, Nerissa?
Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.
Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?
Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.
Bass. Our feast shall be much honoured in your marriage.
Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* SALERIO, *a messenger from Venice.*

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;

197. **so thou canst**: a common use of *so* in the poet's time. See below, line 211, and often elsewhere.

200. **the mistress . . . the maid.** Do these words, taken in their present meaning, correctly express the relation between Portia and Nerissa? Were not these two persons equally gentlewomen?

216. A line of five accents, with two light syllables at the end.

If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.
Por. So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome.
Lor. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did intreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.
Saler. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*
Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.
Saler. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will show you his estate.
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio: what 's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Saler. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.

221. Read from **Sweet** to **lord** as one line, and from **So** to **welcome** as another. Thus Portia's words, **So do I, my lord,** count twice. This peculiarity of Shakespearian verse Abbott calls the "amphibious section." In this case the second line lacks the initial light syllable, and the last five words have but two accents.

229. **him** is reflexive. In Old English the personal pronouns served as reflexives also. So we still say, — "**he looked about him.**"

Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,
That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.
Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
Than ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins; I was a gentleman:
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary and India?

241. **contents that steals.** Shakespeare has many instances of plural verbs ending in *s*. These the reader should classify as he meets them. See Abbott's *Shakespeare Grammar*, 333–9.

246. Not a line of six accents. It ends with two light syllables.

And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?
Saler. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the Duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.
Jes. When I was with him I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.
Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?
Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.
Por. What sum owes he the Jew?
Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

282. Find the passage in the Bible from which Shakespeare borrowed both these names. Account for the form of **Chus**. Consider how **ch** is always pronounced in Hebrew names.

290. See note on II., 1, 46.

Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let us hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads.*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!
Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste: but, till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt.*

299. **hair**: see note on line 18, this scene.

309. **cheer**, in its primitive signification, as in *Mids. N. Dream*, III., 2, 96.

315. **between you and I**: a grammatical error that may still be heard.

SCENE III. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, *and* Gaoler.

Shy. Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of mercy;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:
Gaoler, look to him.

Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

Shy. I 'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou calledst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.

Shy. I 'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
I 'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I 'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I 'll have no speaking: I will have my bond. [*Exit.*

Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

Ant. Let him alone:
I 'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft delivered from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

Salar. I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

9. **fond**, in its primitive meaning.

Ant. The Duke cannot deny the course of law:
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of his state;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Belmont. A room in* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* BALTHASAR.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.
Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion

30. **Since that**: See note on II., 6, 54.
32. **bated**: note two other instances of the word in the play.
3. Which syllable is to be slurred?
6. In what case is **gentleman**?
11. The reader should henceforth be prepared to deal with the ending —*ion* according to the needs of the verse.

Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestowed
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish misery!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it: hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there will we abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition;
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart;
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell, till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased

16. In this verse all the syllables of **Antonio** are needed.

30. Is this omission of a case-ending in accordance with present usage?

To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.*

Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone: I shall be there before thee.

Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed.

[*Exit.*

Por. Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we 'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us?

Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I 'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I 'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal; then I 'll repent,

53. What the traject is Portia goes on to explain.
64. Compare with II., 1, 7.
72. I could not do withal = I could not help it.

And wish, for all that, that I had not killed them;
And twenty of these puny lies I 'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.
But come, I 'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. A garden.*

Enter LAUNCELOT *and* JESSICA.

Laun. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed: so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

3. Of the two meanings of **fear**, as exemplified I., 1, 20, and III., 2, 29, which is wanted here?

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs: if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter LORENZO.

Jes. I 'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

Lor. I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir; only cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover them, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for

the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnished like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawned with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will anon: first, let us go to dinner.

Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.

Jes. Well, I 'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*

58. We still say, a *great* many.
80. **digest**: with double meaning.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Venice. A court of justice.*

Enter the DUKE, *the* Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, *and others.*

Duke. What, is Antonio here?

Ant. Ready, so please your grace.

Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

Ant. I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am armed
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Saler. He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice

8. Let the rhythm determine the accent of the last word.

9. that repeats the since. This use of *that* to take the place of a conjunction is now obsolete. It is frequent in Shakespeare. See, e. g., *Hamlet*, I., 2, 2.

10. envy: a meaning now obsolete. See also line 122, this scene, and *Tempest*, I., 2, 259.

14. Do not mistake the person of the verbs go and call.

To the last hour of act; and then 't is thought
Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touched with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy. I have possessed your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You 'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats. I 'll not answer that;
But, say, it is my humour: is it answered?
What if my house be troubled with a rat
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?

20. Does **remorse** here have its present meaning?

35. See I., 3, 59, this play.

36. What other oath have we seen Shylock use?

39. **your charter**: the entire conception is English, not Venetian.

Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
For affection,
Master of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be rendered,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines

47, 48. Do not misplace the emphasis.

55. In our older English a negative was considered to be strengthened, not destroyed, by being doubled.

63. **Hates any man**: Note the old interrogative form. How does the verb in present English form its interrogative? Does the verb still, in any instances, form its interrogative in the old manner?

66. Would you use the word **think** in this sense?

To wag their high tops and to make no noise,
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that — than which what 's harder? —
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

Shy. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?

You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs —
Why sweat they under burthens? — let their beds
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates
Be seasoned with such viands? You will answer
The slaves are ours: so do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 't is mine and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgement: answer; shall I have it?

72. How would you correct the grammatical irregularity?

89–93. Remember, in reading, that the imperative clauses and the question, **why sweat they**, are all subordinate to the main question, — **shall I say to you.** Do not plead with the court, but ask the court if you shall plead with it.

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.
Saler. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.
Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger.
Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.
Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:
You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
Than to live still and write mine epitaph.

Enter NERISSA, *dressed like a lawyer's clerk.*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?
Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace. [*Presenting a letter.*
Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?
Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.
Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

104. With this line compare 233 in this scene, and make the inference suggested.

105, 106. An "amphibious section." See note on III., 2, 225.

119. In the English of the poet's day it is probable the two words had a slight difference of pronunciation. See Furness' *Variorum.*

122. Evidently a word, usually monosyllabic, must here be read with two syllables. See note, III., 2, 18.

Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.
Gra. O, be thou damned, inexecrable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Governed a wolf, who, hanged for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallowed dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolvish, bloody, starved and ravenous.
Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.
Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?
Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you 'll admit him.
Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

Clerk. [*Reads.*] Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech

124. Be sure of the meaning of **inexecrable**.

you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

Duke. You hear the learned Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, *dressed like a Doctor of Laws.*

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

Por. I did, my lord.

Duke. You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Por. I am informed throughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Por. Is your name Shylock?

Shy. Shylock is my name.

Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not?

Ant. Ay, so he says.

Por. Do you confess the bond?

Ant. I do.

Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.

159. The idiom is common in Shakespearian language. The object Bellario is redundant. Put the line into modern English.

161. If we are to suppose that the Duke has but just sent for Bellario, does not the simultaneousness of the Duke's and Portia's resorting to that learned doctor become incredible? But may not the Duke have been in consultation with Bellario for some time?

174, 175. In what sense does Portia use must? In what sense does Shylock understand her to use it?

Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Por. The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'T is mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above the sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.
Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.
Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?
Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'T will be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.
Shy. A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniel.
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!
Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shy. Here 't is, most reverend doctor, here it is.
Por. Shylock, there 's thrice thy money offered thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.
Por. Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgement: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.
Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgement.

216. Compare Shylock's **thee**, used to Portia, with the **forms** of address he has used elsewhere to her.

235, 236. In what capacity is Portia present in the court? Is she judge, or is she counsel for one of the parties? See also line 238, and the expression there used variously repeated else-

Por. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.
Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shy. 'T is very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.
Shy. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?
"Nearest his heart:" those are the very words.
Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?
Shy. I have them ready.
Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?
Por. It is not so expressed: but what of that?
'T were good you do so much for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 't is not in the bond.
Por. You, merchant, have you anything to say?
Ant. But little: I am armed and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!

where. But consider also whether she finally takes a fee. See what the Duke says in line 398.

243. **more elder.** See *Cæsar*, III., 2, 187, *Tempest*, I., 2, 19, *Hamlet*, II., 1, 11.

247. **balance**: undoubtedly plural. Compare the word *sense*, *Othello*, IV., 3, 95. What element have these words in common, that would cause the dropping of the final *s* of the plural?

253. **'T were good you do**: an occasion for an interesting study of modes and tenses.

256. Compare line 11, this scene.

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom. It is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I 'll pay it presently with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteemed above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Ner. 'T is well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

Shy. These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;

273. It is plain that **presently** has its former meaning, *instantly*, and must be inflected accordingly.

Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian! [*Aside.*
We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge!
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!
Por. Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are "a pound of flesh:"
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shall see the act:
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

288. The verse shows you how to pronounce the name.

290. Accent **pursue** conformably to the rhythm.

301, 318, 322. Note the varying modes, — **if thou dost shed, if thou cut'st, if the scale do turn.**

304. "Amphibious section." See note on III., 2, 221. The measures common to the two verses are in this case the words, **O upright judge**, which furnish the last two accents of one verse and the first two of the other.

Gra. O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!

Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
And let the Christian go.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Por. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

312. **Soft!** What is the modern equivalent of this exclamation?

324. See the same peculiarity in *Troilus and Cressida*, I., 3, 125, *Mids. N. Dream*, V., 1, 412, and in this play, V., 1, 11. Account for this common peculiarity by reference to a phonetic feature which the words concerned have in common.

Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why, then the Devil give him good of it!
I 'll stay no longer question.
Por. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the Duke.
Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's charge.
Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;

360, 361. **That thou shalt . . . before thou ask. Wherein do these constructions differ from those now current?**

The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.
Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.
Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.
Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?
Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.
Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.
Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.
Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?
Shy. I am content.
Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.
Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;

371. A monosyllable, unless it be a pronoun with enclitic accent, rarely makes a light ending. Compare this line with the last one of Sc. 1, Act I., and with 418 in this scene.

379. **presently**: remember what you have already seen to be the meaning of this word.

381. Supply and explain the ellipsis.

I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.
Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.
Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. [*Exit Shylock.*
Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.
Por. I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.
Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman;
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.
[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*
Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.
Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.
Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
And therein do account myself well paid:
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.
Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:

389. **it is a perfect enclitic.**
398. **gratify this gentleman**: i. e., give him a fee.
402. **in lieu whereof**: see *Tempest*, I., 2, 123, *John* V., 4, 44.
404. **The verb cope has an interesting etymology.**

Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.
Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I 'll wear them for your sake;
[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I 'll take this ring from you:
Do not draw back your hand; I 'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.
Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!
I will not shame myself to give you this.
Por. I will have nothing else but only this;
And now methinks I have a mind to it.
Bass. There 's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.
Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answered.
Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.
Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved the ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*

424, 425. Portia is still wearing the garb of a doctor of laws. Is she still talking in this character?

Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued against your wife's commandment.
Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.
[*Exit Gratiano.*
Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A street.*

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed
And let him sign it: we 'll away to-night
And be a day before our husbands home:
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.
Por. That cannot be:
His ring I do accept most thankfully:
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.
Gra. That will I do.
Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
[*Aside to Por.*] I 'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

Por. [*Aside to Ner.*] Thou mayst, I warrant.
We shall have old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we 'll outface them, and outswear them too.
[*Aloud.*] Away! make haste: thou know'st where I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house? [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Belmont. Avenue to* PORTIA'S *house.*

Enter LORENZO *and* JESSICA.

Lor. The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jes. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismayed away.

Lor. In such a night

15. **old swearing**: see *Macbeth*, II., 3, 2, and *Merry Wives*, I., 4, 5.

4. **Troilus — Cressid.** This is not a classical allusion. The Troilus story to which the poet refers is the one he tells in his play of *Troilus and Cressida*, and which he got from Chaucer's poem of the same name.

7. The **Thisbe** story is the subject of the *tedious brief scene*, enacted by *hard-handed men that work in Athens here*, in *Mids. N. Dream*, Act V. This too the poet got from Chaucer (see the *Legende of Goode Women*), or from Ovid.

Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.
Jes. In such a night
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.
Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.
Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.
Lor. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.
Jes. I would out-night you, did nobody come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter STEPHANO.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?
Steph. A friend.

10. The story of **Dido** also the poet may have got from Chaucer, or he may have read Ovid or Virgil. But the **willow** is a touch of his own. In several plays he represents the willow as an emblem of unhappy love. See *Much Ado*, II., 1, 194 and 225, *Hamlet*, IV., 7, 167, *Othello*, Act IV., Sc. 3.

11. As inflectional *d* in modern English regularly falls away, or is absorbed, after *t*, in such verbs as *cut*, *cast*, *set*, so Shakespeare makes it do in **waft**. See *John*, II., 1, 73.

13. **Medea**, gathering her magic herbs by moonlight, is certainly from Ovid.

15. Note the double meaning.

20. **Ne'er** must be read with its usual two syllables to make the verse metrically sound.

23. **did nobody come**: in what mode and why?

Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?

Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet returned?

Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lor. Who calls?

Laun. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

Lor. Leave hollaing, man: here.

Laun. Sola! where? where?

Lor. Here.

Laun. Tell him there 's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning. [*Exit.*

Lor. Sweet soul, let 's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter: why should we go in?
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air. [*Exit Stephano.*

28. **Stephano**: compare *Tempest*, V., 1, 277.

36, 37. Note the two imperative forms, — the ancient and the modern.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There 's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet

60–65. See *Par. Lost*, V., 616–627, *Hymn on the Nativity*, 125–132, *At a Solemn Music*, *Arcades*, and many other passages in Milton. See also *Job*, xxxviii.

62. **cherubins**: criticise this plural form.

77. **mutual**: see *Mids. N. Dream*, IV., 1, 122, and *Henry IV.*, Part I., I., 1, 14.

79. A verse of the normal number of accents. — By **the poet** is undoubtedly meant Ovid.

Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils:
The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.

Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect:
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark
When neither is attended, and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.

80. By all means look up the poet's two other allusions to the Orpheus myth, *Henry VIII.*, III., 1, *song*, and *Two Gentlemen*, III., 2, 78–87.

103. Supply the word needed to convert the line into modern English.

How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*
Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.
Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.
Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.
Por. We have been praying for our husbands' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they returned?
Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.
Por. Go in, Nerissa;
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you. [*A tucket sounds.*
Lor. Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.
Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler: 't is a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, *and their followers.*

Bass. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.
Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,

109. Look up **Endymion** in the classical dictionary, and read Longfellow's poem.

127, 128. How do these lines suggest Portia's reply?

And never be Bassanio so for me:
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.
Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man: this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.
Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.
Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.
Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house:
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.
Gra. [*To Ner.*] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.
Por. A quarrel, ho, already! what 's the matter?
Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, " Love me, and leave me not."
Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave.
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on 's face that had it.
Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.
Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

146. **posy**: see *Hamlet*, III., 2, 162.

154. **respective**: see *Romeo and Juliet*, III., 1, 128, and *John*, I., 1, 188.

Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
A prating boy, that begged it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief:
An 't were to me, I should be mad at it.
Bass. [*Aside.*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off
And swear I lost the ring defending it.
Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begged it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begged mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.
Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.
Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.

167. **riveted**: the two linguals coalesce into one syllable. See *Henry IV.*, Part I., V., 5, 13, and *As You Like It*, I., 2, 256.

173. Take care of the rhythm by contracting two vowel sounds that come together.

Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.
Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I 'll die for 't but some woman had the ring.
Bass. No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me
And begged the ring; the which I did deny him
And suffered him to go displeased away;
Even he that did uphold the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforced to send it after him;

196. What is the antecedent of **that**?

197. What is the meaning of the line?

199–202. The language is confused and involved, but the meaning is clear enough. Render this meaning simply and clearly.

201. Do not read the line with six accents. Consider it as having a double light ending.

206. **civil**: do not mistake the meaning of the word. Look up *civil law*.

I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begged
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I 'll not deny him any thing I have.

Ner. Nor I his clerk: therefore be well advised
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

Gra. Well, do you so; let not me take him, then;
For if I do, I 'll mar the young clerk's pen.

Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself —

Por. Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one: swear by your double self,
And there 's an oath of credit.

Bass. Nay, but hear me:
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth,

216. Compare the other oaths we have found in the course of the play. Remember Portia's prophecy, *we shall have old swearing*, and notice more oaths coming in lines 232, 237, 247.

239. **wealth** has here its primitive meaning.

Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.
Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this
And bid him keep it better than the other.
Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.
Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!
Por. You are all amazed:
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk. Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you
And even but now returned; I have not yet
Entered my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon:
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.
Ant. I am dumb.
Bass. Were you the doctor and I knew you not?
Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.
Por. How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.
Ner. Ay, and I 'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jessica,

262. Consider why, in the compound question, only one of the verbs is in the interrogative position.

From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possessed of.
Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.
Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
Gra. Well, while I live I 'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring. [*Exeunt.*

270. Was it then ignorance on the poet's part that caused him to drop the preposition in IV., 1, 381?

275. I. e., ask us questions.